OUR STORY OF THE MONTH

One More Grandfather Clock Story

I do not know the derivation of this story, but an old beloved university associate of mine in days gone by enjoyed telling it.

The lad was "sparking" with his lassie-love on the front-room sofa. The modern clock in the room said: "Hurry up! Hurry up! Hurry up!" The old grandfather's clock in the hallway gave him this calm, conservative, slow-paced advice: "Take . . . your . . . time! Take . . . your . . time! Take . . .your . . . time!"

Alas and alack, the measure not only of "sparking" but life itself is marked for us in these fast-moving days in which so many of us, I venture to say, do not know where we came from or where we are going — although, of course, the Vermonter usually knows.

A. W. P.

Credit for the striking photograph used in picture of the Atwater Kent Tavern in our last issue should have been given to Herbert Wheaton Congdon (VHS) of Arlington, Vt.

A CHRISTMAS WISH FROM THE VHS STAFF

And for the New Year Too

All of us, our Director, Miss Follette, Mrs. Davidson, Miss Corry, Mr. Hoare, extend to all our members best wishes for this Christmas and many to come. Mr. Pliny Morse, also of the staff, now in Heaton Hospital, Montpelier, Vt., joins with us in this Christmas greeting; and we know he would welcome a word from his many friends among our members.

The new year will be with us before you hear from us again; and we wish to say that all of us are grateful for your interest and your co-operation. Do not hesitate to write us for any information you may think we might supply; small queries about Vermont and its history, personal queries about what may be family histories or old ways of life in the state, larger queries about major controversial issues — any questions in fact will have our attention and prompt answer.

"May your pocketbooks be heavy, and your hearts light!"

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MONTPELIER, VERMONT.
Hon. Leon S. Gay, President; Dr. Arthur W. Peach, Director; Mrs. Madelyn Davidson, Editor.

VHS *News and Notes*
VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Montpelier, Vermont

Sec. 34.66
P. L. & R.

Clara E. Follette
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Montpelier, Vt.

THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MONTPELIER, VERMONT

News & Notes

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Volume 2 January 1951 Number 5

Center Aisle of Museum

AMERICA'S EARLIEST PRESS HEADS SOCIETY'S EXHIBITS

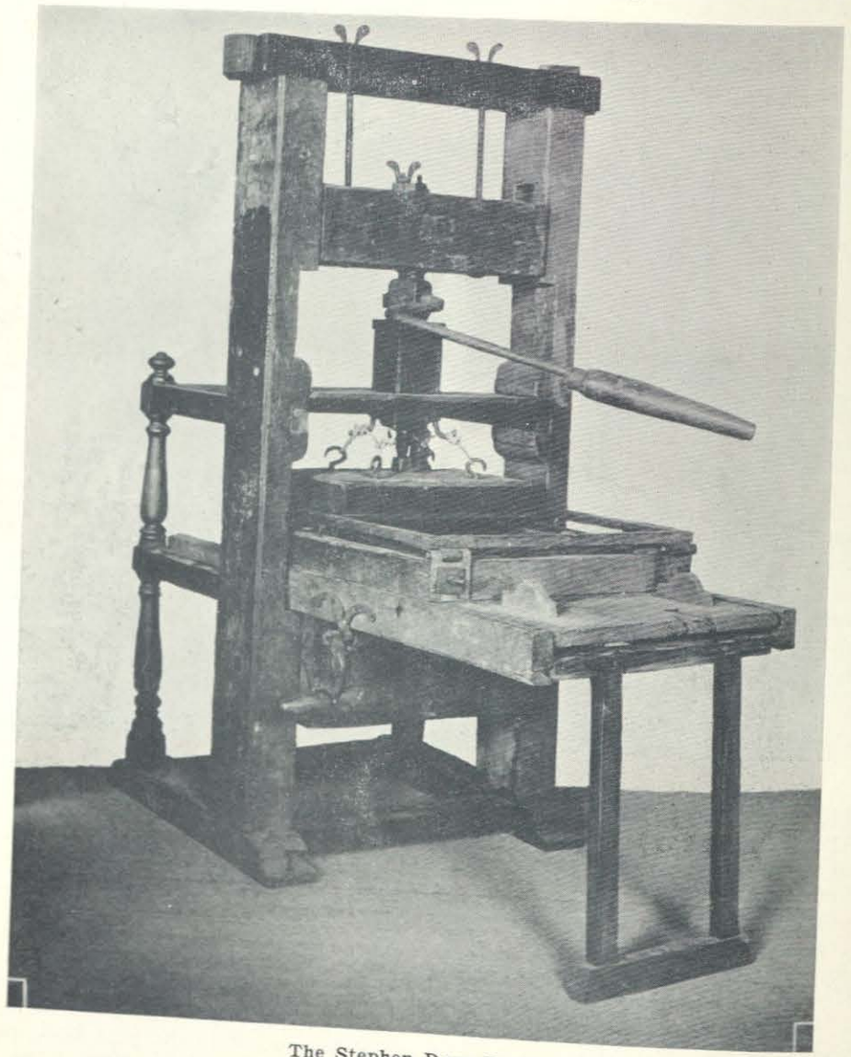
Stephen Daye's Rugged Machine Printed Vermont's First Newspaper

Historical treasures in the State Museum, stemming from the early days of Vermont, are led by the Society's most prized possession, the Stephen Daye Press. This, America's first printing press, wears with quiet dignity the great honors accorded to it. And well it might, for from it came the first printed word in what is now the U. S., "The Freeman's Oath" in 1639, and the *Bay Psalm Book* in 1640. (One of the 11 copies of the latter known to be in existence was sold at auction a very few years ago for $151,000, the highest price ever paid for a rare book in this country.) And in 1781, the Press was used for printing *The Vermont Gazette* or *Green Mountain Post Boy,* the first newspaper published in Vermont.

Even so, the Stephen Daye Press does not monopolize the exhibits of the Society's museum. The two Dewey dioramas give to the onlooker the actual scenes, in three dimensions as through binoculars, of the Battle of Manila in 1898 and Montpelier in the year 1838—memorials to the famed Vermont naval hero, George Dewey. And progressing from the entrance, which the dioramas frame, we may visually trace Vermont's history. There is the tusk of an elephant found in a peat bed in Brattleboro in 1865—the hip bone of an elk from Fletcher (1878)—

Vermont Indian relics such as amulets, knives, pipes, heads, arrowheads, and our latest most important accession, the Harry N. Woodcock collection, found in Addison and Rutland counties. (And we have a genuine birch bark canoe — a fine example of canoes made by Indians.)

Next come the Vermont pioneers with their tools, household gadgets, soapstone waterpipe, lanterns, arms, medical instruments—a plow used before 1800 at Weybridge—a rocking bed used by the Galusha family (Jonas was the 8th Vt. governor)—a hand-made cheese press, c. 1788—a lap melodeon in use in 1840 — a carpenter chair said to have been saved from destruction in the Royalton raid (Oct. 16, 1780), having been thrown over a bank—



The Stephen Daye Press

an early English oak table, at least as old as the 16th century, which could have been brought over on the Mayflower or another colonial ship and followed the frontier to Vermont. This was said to have been used in "Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese" in Leadenhall Street in London and to often have had Doctor Johnson and his cronies sitting around it.

Vermont's part in our country's wars is illustrated by various separate articles and displays. There is the collection of powder horns, dating from the French and Indian Wars (1754), considered to be one of the finest in the country. It was loaned some years back to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. In another case is the wood from the Schooner Royal Savage,—the flagship of General Benedict Arnold, sunk in Lake Champlain in 1776. The story of Vermont in the War of 1812 is told by mementos of Thomas MacDonough, the young lieutenant (later promoted to commodore) who, with a makeship fleet constructed at Vergennes, defeated a superior British fleet. Fearful of being trapped without control of Lake Champlain, the English withdrew into Canada. Among other Vermont heroes of the same war was Captain Horace B. Sawyer who started as a midshipman, was assigned to the "Constitution" which captured the British ships "Cyano" and "Levant." There is a large collection on display which has just recently been presented by the Captain's granddaughter.

Next, we come to the Civil and Spanish American War periods. There are Vermonters' watches, surgical instruments, boots, drums, powder flasks, a cannon ball of the St. Albans raid, rifles and wallets. At the sides of the portrait of Washington (see illustration) are two gangway boards (doors) of the pride of the American Navy, U. S. S. Oregon, the flagship of Capt. Charles E. Clark, a native of Bradford, which made the now famous run of 15,000 miles around Cape Horn in 66 days — the longest and quickest trip of any battleship afloat. In spite of the long voyage, the Oregon immediately assisted in administering a crushing defeat to the Spanish Navy at Santiago (1898). This very trip demonstrated the need of a canal to connect our two oceans. As for World War II, the only known memento of the U. S. transport "President Coolidge," which was sunk in the Pacific in 1942, is a board, rescued by a Vermonter and sent to Gov. Wills. Nearly 1200 Vermont boys were on board when the ship struck a mine and sank, but there was very little loss of life.

One of the most striking cases is that containing the silver service presented to the U. S. S. Vermont in 1907, by the State of Vermont at a cost of $3500. On one piece, there is a carefully modeled Guernsey cow — on another, the maple tree — then the state seal — the Morgan horse. The punch bowl, 18th century in character, is gold-lined, has a capacity of 56 pints. Its decoration is suggestive of the sea and the state of Vermont. There is a representation of a scene in a Vermont sugar-house (actually that of Gov. Charles J. Bell), and on one side of the foot, maple leaves surround the seal of the Navy; on the other, a spray of clover surrounds the seal of Vermont. (Silversmiths — Bogle Bros. of White River).

A special case tells us that the first school in America for the training of teachers was erected at Concord in 1823. Dr. Samuel Read Hall, its founder, was the first to use the blackboard as a school appliance.

An extensive collection of instruments tells the story of General James Whitelaw (1748-1829), 2nd Surveyor-General of Vermont, map-maker and pioneer of Ryegate.

At the far end of the museum (see illustration) is the portrait of George Washington. This was saved from the fire that destroyed the second State House in 1857.

Easily discernible in the illustration is the case of early Vermont children's clothes and toys, and, directly to its right, the representative gifts from France to Vermont, received in 1949 on the "Merci Train." And proceeding toward the entrance one comes first to the fine examples of early Vermont handwork (weaving, sewing and crocheting); then from the extensive sword collection to the World War I articles of uniform and weapons. And looking comfortable enough to be used after this long tour is the sofa, believed to have been used on Lafayette's visit to Montpelier in 1825. Close by, near the entrance are various pieces recalling Lafayette's stay — remnants of a cup used by Lafayette, relics of a house in which President James Monroe and the Marquis were entertained . . .

The fine array of early china along the wall is the memorial collection which be-

longed to Hattie J. Dyer Weeks, wife of Gov. John E. Weeks (1927-31). The button collection has been loaned by Mrs. Ida B. Horton of Montpelier, who, as a member of the Museum Committee, changes this case at intervals, with her own displays.

One of the most interesting sections to the layman is that devoted to coins. Since our state was the first to authorize coinage (1785), which it did as the independent republic of Vermont, it is doubly significant. There were probably 31 varieties of Vermont cents struck at the Rupert mint (1785-1788) by Reuben Harmon, who also cut the Vermont seal for Ira Allen in 1779. There are 27 on display.

An exhibit of Vermontiana would not be complete unless sufficient attention were called to the Allens, especially the Revolutionary heroes Ethan and Ira. So in what we call the Allen case (very near the dioramas), we may see, for instance, Mrs. Ethan Allen's ear rings, the brick taken from the roof of the English prison in New York where the British held Ethan captive; then there is Ethan's gun, and snuff box . . . The same section contains the Royall Tyler collection (Vermont dramatist, poet and jurist) and that of the state's first governor, Thomas Chittenden.

In making our tour, we have missed the case at left front of the entrance — that containing some of the inventions of Vermonters. There is the boiler dated 1792 and the revolving steam engine patented in 1815 by Captain Samuel Morey, "the Edison of his day," little-known genius who performed over 4000 experiments and was granted 20 recorded patents. He operated a steamboat on the Connecticut 14 years before the better-known voyage of Fulton on the Hudson. . . . Then there is the world globe by James Wilson of Bradford, the Vermonter who gave America its first about 1810. Among other exhibits one may see the first telephone used in Vermont, and the story of Thomas Davenport (1802-1851), electrical genius, whose friends claimed that Morse "stole" his idea of the telegraph.

We must not neglect to mention the Percival Clement clock (featured in the November issue of this bulletin), the catamount killed in Barnard in 1881, the skeleton of a small whale found in Charlotte in 1849 . . . And as a special feature for the members of Legislature (now in session), their families and friends, and for the groups of school children who will be making special tours to Montpelier during the winter months, there are being arranged county historical exhibits with a representation for each town — Washington, Bennington, Windham and Orange counties are now complete. There are other displays, of course, not mentioned in this sketch and others in reserve which will be shown from time to time. All friends — members or not — are cordially invited.

Silver Service U. S. S. Vermont

WHERE WERE THE INDIANS IN VERMONT?

Also the French and Pre-Indian Man?

The story of the past that is hidden away along the lakes, among the hills and valleys of Vermont is pretty dim; and the Society is now initiating a complete archaeological survey of the state, to be followed by scientific study of all Indian sites located, also the shores of Lake Champlain and elsewhere where evidence of early French settlements still exist, and then farther back to the man who preceded the Indian.

Some studies were made by a former able state geologist, George H. Perkins, and some exploration has been done on various sites in Vermont and along the Lake shore by the Champlain Archaeological Society, but, by and large, the state is an undiscovered country in a detailed sense.

Since the announcement of the plans was made through the state papers, a wide interest has been revealed through offers of aid and also notices of sites in places where traditionally no Indians had ventured.

Fortunately, Mr. Edward S. Brooks, long associated with archaeological studies in Massachusetts as director of field work for the Massachusetts Archaeology Society of that state, also for the New England Museum of Natural History and the Heye Foundation of New York, is now making his permanent home in Rutland, and he will have full charge of the plans and the research itself. His address is Rutland, Vermont, P. O. Box 185; and some of our readers who are interested in such research or who own or know places where there is evidence of Indian remains are invited to get in touch with him. Full reports will appear in the *Quarterly*, of course, and news of progress in *News and Notes*.

The impressive Woodcock Collection, gathered around Vergennes, is now being carefully studied, and Mr. Brooks has placed on exhibition the outstanding items in the collection. The collection and also the exhibit case were willed to the Society by Mr. Woodcock.

The VHS State archaeological committee as now organized is as follows: Edward C. Brooks, chairman; Hon. Redfield Proctor, Proctor; Dr. David Marvin, Essex Junction; T. E. Daniels, Orwell; John Clement, Rutland; M. Rogers Warren, Manchester; Robert D. Proctor, Brandon; Prof. Benjamin R. Andrews, Burlington; Walter C. Scott, Rutland; Walter G. Bruce, Derby; Prof. Leon W. Dean, Burlington; Ruth Westman, East Middlebury; R. H. Benford, Fair Haven; W. A. Ross, St. Albans, H. J. Perkins, Burlington.

WHO THEY ARE?

Officers of Local Societies

We are trying to gather in the names of the officers of all local historical societies in the state for final publication in the *Quarterly* and for use also in planning a summer institute for delegates and members of these societies.

These societies, often given little or no recognition in their own communities, contribute in a lasting way to historical values that would perish without their interest. We begin the list with the Williamstown Historical Society: Pres. Percy Jeffords; vice pres. Mrs. Arthur Carpenter; sec. Mrs. Lester Morgan; treas. Mrs. Myrtle Wark; custodians, Mrs. Charles Curtiss, Mrs. Ora Whitney, Mrs. Henry Bezio. Chairman, Historical Committee, Mrs. Earl A. Boyce.

Groton, Vt., Town History Commission: Waldo F. Glover, historian, 12 Reservoir St., Winchester, Mass.; committee— Mrs. Geo. Ricker, chairman, Mrs. W. H. Jeffrey, sec.; Mrs. Harry Hosmer, treas.; Mrs. B. L. Brown, Mrs. J. K. White, Mrs. Geo. Dimock, Mr. C. E. Ricker, Mrs. Rita McAllister, Mrs. Hazen White, Mr. John French, Mr. S. N. Welch, Mrs. Henry Goodine, all of Groton. We will welcome the assistance of members and secretaries of local societies in compiling a complete list.

A. W. P.

ANOTHER WANT AD

Kent Tavern Issue Needed

So many of you rescued us with your copies of the Liberty Bell issue of *News and Notes* that we are making another plea. This time we need a few more copies of the November issue which contained the Kent Tavern story and illustration. There has been much interest in that particular news letter, and the demand was greater than we could plan for. So, once again, will you help us out?

LEASE LANDS STUDY NOW AVAILABLE TO GENERAL PUBLIC

Book Now Placed On Open Sale

In the December issue of *News and Notes*, we announced the publication of *The Vermont Lease Lands* by Walter T. Bogart, Professor of Political Science at Middlebury College. The result of ten years of careful and detailed research, this account of the Lease Land system which has always existed in nearly all towns of Vermont is now on open sale. The cost is $6.16, which includes postage. Sorry — we cannot make this a book dividend or allow a discount, since the cost of publica-

tion is much higher than originally budgeted. The book will be sent promptly to any purchaser on receipt of check.

Drop us a note, and we'll send you a circular regarding it, giving the chapter headings and full specifications. (457 pp. Bibli. Appendices. Index.)

THE VERMONT PANTHER

Panther, Panther — Where is the Panther?

There is no better proof, probably, of the nearness of pioneer days to the present in terms of memory than in the appearance once in so often of the traditional "Vermont panther."

The Director of the Society, a few weeks ago, when the war news from Korea looked pretty dark, thought he might raise the question of the "Vermont panther" — whether he was still alive or not. His letter to the *Burlington Free Press* promptly set the state agog as he expected, and the fun began. Letters poured in from Vermonters, honest and upright citizens, who maintained that they had seen panthers recently. By actual count, if the observers were right, there must have been during recent years about fifty panthers in the state. One writer insisted that some years ago, he and his friends in camp saw a panther outside the camp, another eating a doe, and then three panthers drinking from a spring.

One letter stated that there was a stuffed panther in the Fleming Museum in Burlington which according to hearsay was killed by Ethan Allen.

Our Director took the position that if Ethan had killed the panther, he certainly would have left the story behind him—probably making it clear that in the tussle he threw away his gun, caught the panther by a back leg and bounced it off a tree. This particular clue, for obvious reasons, was followed; and the report from the Museum was that the panther was killed long ago in the Adirondacks.

The fun went merrily on. The *Rutland Daily News,* refusing to commit itself, did have a letter by its "Panther" editor, "Panther Pete," arguing that the panther should be permitted to exist. Practical jokers next took a hand, and hair-raising panther stories began to appear in the press. A member of the Society promptly offered a prize of $100 for a Vermont panther delivered here at the Society's headquarters under conditions that would make it a real Vermont panther. The Sportsmen's Club of Brattleboro also offered a cash prize.

Hunter—and Panther Killed in 1881 — Photo Gift of Dr. C. H. Burr, Montpelier

Director Peach takes the flat position, coming of a long line of Vermont hunters and having hunted all over Vermont, that the last panther killed in Vermont was killed in Barnard. His picture and the hunter who killed him you see above. There is exact, absolutely sound evidence supporting the claim. The mounted panther, in an excellent state of preservation, is in our State Museum. One was killed in Johnson some years ago according to reports, but an investigation showed that the stuffed panther had been carried away in the flood. A hunter reports that he shot one a few years ago, but it escaped, and somebody, he heard, found it and buried it. All of these panthers have a way of disappearing under investigation. The Barnard panther is decidedly here.

We are keeping, naturally, files headed "Panther Lore," and the Vermont panther is to have a long history, and we welcome any accounts of him, tall stories or any kind of stories.

One of the earliest laws in Vermont provided for care in setting traps for bears, wolves and catamounts. Early diaries, letters, and documents carry many references to bears and wolves, but none to catamounts; so the logical inference is that even in the old days, they were rare.

To silence the panther-fiends who argued that the panthers came from Quebec, a letter was sent to the Fish and Game Commissioner of the Province, and he replied that no panthers had appeared in the Province within the memory of living men. The letter is on file in this office. Our deer hunters in the past season shot over 6000 bucks but reported no panthers; and our farm people who would see panthers first, are noticeably silent.

Our members, their friends, and others, and their children who spend their summers in the state need not worry. The Vermont panther is in the same class with the Lake Champlain sea serpent which appears now and then; and our Director may turn his attention to that "critter" next — if the war news again, is gloomy.

LIBRARY AND MUSEUM GIFTS CONTINUE

VHS Collections on Increase

Another month, and more donors. We are pleased to list those members and other interested supporters who have made gifts and/or loans to your Society during November and December:

Mrs. E. A. Bradley, *Bethel;* Ralph C. Brown, *Montpelier;* Mrs. L. L. Callan, *Staten Island, N. Y.;* Mrs. E. G. Carlisle, *So. Burlington;* Effingham Evarts, *Windsor;* Dr. Robert Hazen, *Thomaston, Conn.;* Ruth A. Hesselgrave, *Bridgeport, Conn.;* Mrs. Guy B. Horton, *Montpelier;* Harry Klug, *Moretown;* Mrs. Mary H. Patch, *Windsor,* for the D. A. R., Windsor; W. L. Peltz, *Albany, N. Y.;* Louis B. Puffer, *Burlington;* Ralph W. Putnam, *Waterbury;* Dolores C. Renze, *Denver, Col.,* for the State Historical Society of Utah, *Salt Lake City, Utah;* F. L. Greene, *St. Albans;* Miss Aimee F. Brown, through Mrs. Bert N. Swan, *No. Springfield;* Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, *Detroit, Mich.;* Fred A. Howland, *Montpelier;* Miss Jane Morey, *Duluth, Minn.;* Miss Mildred Sawyer, *Wianno ,Mass.;* St. Michael's College Library, *Winooski Park.*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Or Was It Thought for Food?

According to the *Fifth Annual Report of the Vermont Reform School for the Year 1869-1870,* we find the *Bill of Fare of Boys.* Let's take a look:

Sabbath: breakfast, white bread and coffee; dinner, white bread and molasses; supper, white bread, milk and cake. *Monday*: breakfast, white bread and coffee; dinner, salt beef and vegetables; supper, Indian pudding and milk. *Tuesday*: breakfast, same; dinner, beef soup and vegetables; supper, brown bread and milk. *Wednesday*: breakfast, same; dinner, baked beans and beets; supper, Indian cake and milk. *Thursday*: breakfast, same; dinner, salt meat and vegetables; supper, Indian pudding and milk. *Friday*: breakfast, same; dinner, salt fish and beets; supper, white bread and milk. *Saturday*: breakfast, same; dinner, baked beans and beets; supper, Indian cake and milk.

There were 129 in school during that year; the average age was 15; the chief cause of commitment, larceny; the majority of boys was from Chittenden county; 45 had used intoxicating drinks, and 33 had never written even the alphabet.

DEWEY PAINTING ON LOAN

National Exhibition Includes Work of Zogbaum

The painting which normally hangs in the lobby of the State House, "Admiral George Dewey at Manila Bay," is on loan to the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, for an exhibition honoring the sesquicentennial of the city of Washington as the national capitol. This is an exhibit of American artists which has been open since July 8th. The significance of the Vermont painting is that it was done by Rufus Fairchild Zogbaum (1849-1925), essayist, author and artist, and widely known for the historic value of his works. Most of Zogbaum's paintings were based on his own observations on the scene of action.

The exhibition, "American Processional," will be closed this month.

OUR STORY OF THE MONTH

You Will Pardon Another Pun

It seems that William Maxwell Evarts of the really great Windsor, Vt., family strain was campaigning in the South in the interests of his party; and wagers were laid among his friends that in what have become known as "whistle stops," he could not fashion a pun on the name of each place. He did, however, in each case, cleverly fabricating a pun at each stop. When Chattanooga appeared, it was believed that he would lose his wagers to the joy of his companions, but he was equal to the emergency. Facing the crowd from his coach platform, he announced that he had time for only a few "Chattanugatory remarks" — probably the first time in the history of the English language that "nugatory" had been so "puningly" used.

A. W. P.

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THE VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MONTPELIER, VERMONT

News & Notes

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

Volume 2 February 1951 Number 6

Douglas Day Celebration at Brandon, June 27, 1913

A BRANDON BOY GOES WEST

Gains Lincoln National Prominence

The summit of nearly every hilltop within the border of the Green Mountain State commands a view of the birthplace of some Vermonter who has made a national reputation in world affairs. February marks the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and it is interesting to note how a Vermonter influenced the life of this great American.

Stephen A. Douglas, who became the "little giant" of Illinois politics, was born in a humble cottage in Brandon on April 23, 1813. Stephen lived the life of a farm boy until he was fifteen; and, since farming did not appeal to him as a permanent means of livelihood, he moved to Middlebury and worked at the cabinet maker's trade. Here he first became interested in political affairs; and, with several of his young friends, he would debate the pros and cons of the viewpoint of Andrew Jackson and John Q. Adams. Young Douglas became an ardent Democrat through these debates.

He returned to Brandon and continued his trade but was forced to give up his career as a craftsman because of a serious illness. However, he now was able to attend the local academy for a short time.

Stephen's family moved to New York state meanwhile, and there the 17 year old boy attended school, studied the classics and set his mind on a career of law. Against his family's wishes, he started out to seek his fortune and decided to head westward. He visited Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, and finally reached Jacksonville, Illinois, on foot, with 37 cents in his pocket.